

Message Text

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TO USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 098415

EXDIS MILITARY ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING REPEAT BEIRUT 2011 SENT ACTION SECSTATE, CAIRO INFO DAMASC
US,
TEL AVIV, JIDDA, KUWAIT 29 APR 77

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2011

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR LE US SY PLO
SUBJ: IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO ACCORD: VIEWS OF FONMIN BOUTROS

1. DURING CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS APRIL 28, HE ASKED
ME WHAT WE THOUGHT PROSPECTS WERE FOR IMPLEMENTATION CAIRO
ACCORD. I SAID I HAD BEEN ABOUT TO ASK HIM SAME QUESTION.
EVENTS OF PAST WEEK, IN WHICH HEAVILY-ARMED SYRIAN FORCE USING
TANKS HAD DESTROYED NUMBER OF APARTMENT BUILDINGS AND KILLED MANY
INNOCENT CIVILIANS IN ATTEMPT, SUCCESS OF WHICH NOT CLEAR, TO
BRING UNDER CONTROL GROUP OF PALESTINIANS ESTIMATED NUMBER 100,
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INDICATED DIFFICULTY OF PROBLEM. WE GATHERED, HOWEVER, THAT
SYRIANS WERE STILL COMMITTED TO IMPLEMENTATION CAIRO ACCORD.

2. BOUTROS SAID HE FEARED IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO ACCORD NOT
WITHIN PHYSICAL CAPABILITY OF SYRIANS, EVEN WERE THEY WILLING
TAKE POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL RISK WHICH WOULD BE INVOLVED IN
THEIR TAKING ON THE PALESTINIANS. SYRIANS MIGHT BE WILLING TO

TRY BUT RESULT LIKELY ESTABLISH THEIR NET INFERIORITY VIS-A-VIS PALESTINIANS, AND THIS WOULD BE MISTAKE. THIS WAS VERY DEPRESSING STATE OF AFFAIRS AND HE WONDERED WHETHER WE HAD ANY SUGGESTIONS AS TO WHAT LEBANESE COULD DO. WAS THERE SOME DIPLOMATIC ACTION THEY COULD TAKE WHICH MIGHT HELP?

3. I SAID IT SEEMED TO ME THERE WERE TWO THEORETICAL POSSIBILITIES. ONE WAS TO GET SAUDIS, KUWAITIS AND EGYPTIANS TO GIVE UNQUALIFIED SUPPORT TO SYRIAN IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCORD. OTHER, WHICH HAD ALREADY BEEN DISCUSSED AND REJECTED, WAS POSSIBILITY OF INTERNATIONAL FORCE IN SOUTH, WHICH MIGHT HELP SITUATION THERE BUT WOULD NOT HELP SITUATION IN BEIRUT. BOUTROS SHOOK HIS HEAD INDICATING HE DID NOT THINK EITHER OF THESE IDEAS WORKABLE AND ASKED THAT USG GIVE FURTHER THOUGHT TO WHAT MIGHT BE DONE. HE LOOKED FORWARD TO DISCUSSING THIS WITH ME ON MY RETURN FROM CONSULTATION. (BOUTROS HIMSELF IS LEAVING FOR BRUSSELS MAY FIRST AND WILL NOT BE BACK UNTIL JUST BEFORE MY DEPARTURE.)

4. I SAID WE HAD HEARD FROM DAMASCUS THAT ASAD HAD CONVEYED VIA COLONEL KHOI SOVIET GUARANTEES REGARDING SECURITY OF LEBANON, ITS SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. WE ALSO UNDERSTOOD SYRIANS FELT SECURITY IN SOUTH COULD BE ESTABLISHED BY EMPLOYING VANGUARDS OF THE LEBANESE ARMY (DAMASCUS 2665). BOUTROS SMILED WEAKLY AND SAID THIS WAS SIMPLY FOR INTERNAL SYRIAN CONSUMPTION. JUST WHAT WAS IT SOVIETS WERE GOING TO GUARANTEE AND HOW? EVERYONE KNEW THAT THE VANGUARDS COULD NOT BE USED AS A FORCE IN THE SOUTH AND THAT WAS NOT A SERIOUS PROPOSITION.

5. RETURNING TO QUESTION OF IMPLEMENTATION CAIRO ACCORD, BOUTROS
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SAID THERE WOULD BE NO STABILITY UNLESS PLO LAID DOWN ALL ITS ARMS AND CHRISTIANS DID THE SAME. AS THINGS NOW STOOD, HE COULD NOT VISUALIZE SYRIANS BRINGING THIS ABOUT. HE WAS VERY UNHAPPY WITH STATE OF AFFAIRS.

6. COMMENT: BOUTROS MORE DEPRESSED THAN ANY TIME SINCE MY ARRIVAL HERE. SARKIS GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN UNUSUALLY (FOR IT) STRONG POSITION ON IMPLEMENTATION CAIRO AGREEMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS INTERPRETATION. IT APPARENTLY HAS DONE SO IN BELIEF SYRIANS WOULD BE WILLING AND ABLE TO IMPLEMENT IT UNILATERALLY IF NECESSARY. THEY APPARENTLY COMING TO CONCLUSION SYRIANS HAVE NEITHER DIPLOMATIC NOR MILITARY ABILITY TO DO SO AND THIS IS EXTREMELY DISTURBING TO THEM. MY DCM AND DATT DO NOT SHARE BOUTROS'S PESSIMISM AS TO SYRIAN CAPABILITIES, BUT I DO.

PARKER

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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